

## Short Picks – Week 14

The teams playing the best football at the end of the season have survived the war of attrition to become the thirty-two finalists playing for the opportunity to win the gold in "Chocolate Town". The sixteen games this weekend are spread out around the state so many of you football fans should have an opportunity to see at least one game.

"Short Picks" improved from the previous week's prognostications by picking a whopping 24 correct with just 5 incorrect. Another week of the same will sure help in contract talks with PFN for next season. I am feeling lucky so let's take a look at this week.

The Conemaugh Twp. Indians had last week off and should be well rested and well prepared for the Bears of Clairton. The Indians' offensive line opened some lanes for running back Zeth Zaman in the past few weeks enabling Township to stay alive in the playoffs. However, the key for the Indians to this week's game will be the defensive side of the ball. 'Da Bears have a running back by the name of Deonte Howard. Deonte is seeing quite a bit of daylight from his upfront big five. Clairton's passing game is not bad either. The two week rest and preparation is nice, but three weeks, might not be enough to topple...**'Da Bears.**

Recently the Indians of Millersburg have been playing great defense with just enough offense to win. In the last two weeks the Indians scored 29 points while giving up 25 tallies. Millersburg travels to Hershey Park Arena to face a rugged bunch of Crimson Crushers of Bishop McCort. The Crushers rely on a devastating ground game. Running back Josh Seidel found the end zone on four occasions last week. The Indians defense must rise to the challenge of the McCort offensive unit, but if not, a few more offensive TD's will be needed by Millersburg if the Indians expect to stay with the Crimson Crushers...**Bishop McCort.**

Tri-Valley and Southern Columbia seemed to struggle at times this season as both the Bulldogs and the Tigers enter this week with identical 9-4 records. So. Columbia was pre-season ranked at number 4 and I believe at one point in the season the Tigers dropped out of the top ten. It has been a roller coaster ride for both schools. Neither team seems to have the one or two outstanding players, just solid team effort. I'm going with the reputation of the team with 12 trips to the state title game...**Southern Columbia.**

The Clarion Bobcats meet the top ranked Steelers of Farrell. The Bobcats' defense yielded zero points in the last three playoff games. The Steelers defense surrendered just seven points. Sounds like a defensive game on tap, but hold your horses! Farrell's offensive production is an astonishing 126 points in the last three games. Both teams play a stingy defense, but the Steelers have the better offense...**Farrell.**

Lancaster Catholic is an offensive machine having a scoring average of 50+ points in the past eight weeks. The Crusaders' offense will provide a severe test for the Loyalsock Lancers. The Lancers sport a 10-3 record with some quality wins and a couple of puzzling losses. The obvious yet simple

question is "Can the Lancers stop the Crusaders high scoring offense?" District 4 is known for its hard-nosed defense. My upset special for the week...**Loyalsock Lancers.**

I wrongly picked the Spartans of North Schuylkill to lose for a number of times this season, but each time the Spartans came out on top. This week the Spartans play '08 state runner-up West Catholic. It is time for me to get on the Spartan bandwagon...**North Schuylkill.**

The Bedford Bisons opened the season with four straight losses. Since then Bedford has improved to a 7-6 record. It has been like a dream for the Bisons as they move on to this week semi-final game with the Centurians of Greensburg Central Catholic. The Centurians are playing their best football of the season with a yeoman effort from star running back David Miller. Mr. Miller could turn the Bison dream season into a nightmare...**Greensburg Central Catholic.**

Wilmington is the defending state champ. The Greyounds had one hic-cup with a loss earlier in the campaign. This week's opposition comes from the Rangers of Forest Hills a team very capable of giving the Greyhounds their second loss of the season. So I guess most would call this an upset...**Forest Hills.**

The combination of quarterback Brendan Nosovitch and receiver Kevin Gulyas gives Allentown Central Catholic a formidable offensive tandem. Allentown Central Catholic's Vikings will test the Selinsgrove Seals pass defense. The Seal won't go down easily, so this one will go to the wire...**Allentown Central Catholic.**

Archbishop Wood and Pottsgrove get together in North East Philly. Wood's Vikings will face a very strong defensive unit in the Falcons. I look for a low scoring game with a victory for...**Pottsgrove.**

If you like good old fashioned running attacks in a football game, then you will love West Allegheny versus Erie Cathedral Prep. W.A. and Prep are two evenly matched teams with both having outstanding running games. West Allegheny offense is led by running back Mike Caputo while the Ramblers rely on Shyquawn Pullium and Justin Wiley. Also, West Allegheny can go to the airways when necessary with quarterback Jarod Buck. This will be a nail biter. Last team with the ball grinds out the winning score...**West Allegheny.**

The Indians of Susquehanna Township will spend some time this week planning an offense to attack the stubborn defense of the Barons of Manheim Central. The Barons defense is led by Dakota Royer. Dakota will be keying on Indian standout Ben Dupree. The outcome will depend on who wins the Royer/Dupree showdown. My crystal ball says...**Manheim Central.**

The Explorers of LaSalle College travel to Bethlehem to face the Easton Red Rovers. LaSalle relies on quarterback Drew Loughery to guide a very efficient offense. Last Thursday the Red Rovers won a game against Phillipsburg, N.J. then beat Parkland on Saturday night. You have to love an effort like that...**Easton.**

Bishop McDevitt is the odds on favorite to win this week's semi-final game with Cumberland Valley. Cumberland Valley will keep this game closer than most might expect, but in the end...**Bishop McDevitt.**

The Little Lions of State College seem to surprise the pundits each year with victories playing from the underdog role. The Little Lions were considered to be underdogs this week when they travel to Altoona's Mansion Park to face juggernaut Woodland Hills. What makes this game so difficult is the fact that Woody High paid an expensive price for last week's victory over Gateway. The Wolverines lost three top players to injuries for this week. Question is, can the Wolverines fill the void of those three players? Little Lions make it close, but no cigar...**Woodland Hills.**

In other games:

**Pitt** over Cincy Go Panthers